

Supporting All Students

In order to address both the academic and non-academic needs of Montana students, the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) encourages Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to adopt a whole-child philosophy to ensure that all students receive a fair, equitable, and high quality education. The OPI provides support to LEAs in using data-driven approaches to identify and address the needs of every student, as well as works to assist LEAs in providing equitable access to a broad well-rounded education aimed at developing our children into college and career ready young adults. This work is rooted in our rigorous college and career readiness standards and is based on an integrated multi-tiered model that includes social and emotional well-being, health and safety, and family and community factors in addition to the traditional academic and behavioral concerns typically used to identify a child's needs.

To implement these supports, the OPI has put in place a Leadership Council to both align and target the agency resources to most effectively support the LEAs in serving every student's needs. The council is comprised of leaders from every division in the agency, as well as the Superintendent's leadership team. By employing this leadership collaborative the OPI is able to more effectively make decisions regarding the types and intensity of support that will be made available to each LEA in the state to support student learning and success. This effort has resulted in strong cross-agency collaboration and has greatly reduced the duplication of supports being provided to LEAs. By aligning our initiatives and work, the agency has become more efficient in addressing priorities as well as improving budgetary decisions. The result is that the OPI's key initiatives and its collaborative use of resources has a much broader impact in supporting every child's success. The funds available under Title IV will be used to strengthen the evidence-based supports already in place rather than in constructing or using duplicative support systems in each division.

The sections that follow provide an overview of the strategies currently employed by OPI and, with the input from our stakeholders, those that are anticipated to be provided under this State Plan in each of the following critical areas.

P-12 Continuum

Montana is dedicated to ensuring the state's education system prepares every child to graduate from high school ready for college and careers. Montana's goal is to provide equitable access to educational opportunity through a continuum, including transitions from grade to grade, of every student's educational experience from preschool through grade 12 to postsecondary education and careers.

Key Initiatives to Support the P-12 Continuum

- **Montana Preschool Development**
This project is jointly implemented by the Governor's Office, the Office of Public Instruction (OPI), and the Department of Health and Human Services (DPHHS.)
<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/index.html>
- **Montana Early Childhood Guiding Documents and Standards**
The early years of a child's life—from birth to age eight—are critically important for learning and development. The Montana Office of Public Instruction, along with its partners, are supporting P-3 learning communities in providing our youngest learners a great start with Preschool Guidelines and Early Learning Standards.
http://opi.mt.gov/Curriculum/EarlyChildhood/Index.html#gpm1_3

- Montana College and Career Academic Standards
 Montana's Content Standards are adopted by the Board of Public Education through the administrative rulemaking process. The content standards for academic subject areas are promulgated in Title 10, Chapters 53 and 54. The content standards are used by school districts to develop local curriculum and assessments in all the content areas including the arts, career and technical education, English language arts, health, physical education, digital literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, and world languages. The K-12 content standards describe what students shall know, understand, and be able to do in these content areas.
<http://opi.mt.gov/Curriculum/Index.html>
- Montana College and Career Readiness Standards Commission
 The Montana College and Career Readiness Standards Commission includes representatives from K-12, higher education, state agencies, and businesses to advise the Superintendent of Public Instruction on academic standards and best practices to prepare our students to succeed in college and careers.
http://www.opi.mt.gov/media_Center/MCCRS.html
- Graduation Matters Montana
 Funding from the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation supports the implementation of locally-designed Graduation Matters initiatives that engage schools, communities, businesses, and families in a focused effort to increase the number of students who graduate prepared for college and careers.
<http://graduationmatters.mt.gov/>
- Career and Technical Education/Big Sky Pathways
 Montana has over 500 approved Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and over 800 certified teachers in Agriculture, Business, Marketing, Family and Consumer Sciences, Industrial Technology, and Health Sciences. More than 150 Montana high schools participate in the federal Carl D. Perkins and state Career and Technical Education grant programs to support and improve their Career and Technical Education programs. The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV) calls for states to offer "career and technical programs of study," known as Big Sky Pathways in Montana, as an option to students and their parents when planning for and completing future coursework.
http://opi.mt.gov/programs/CTAE/CTE.html#gpm1_1
- Indian Education for All
 In 1999, the Montana Legislature passed House Bill 528 into law (MCA 20-1-501), which is commonly referred to as Indian Education for All (IEFA). It is the constitutionally declared policy of this state to recognize the distinct and unique cultural heritage of American Indians and to be committed in its educational goals to the preservation of their cultural heritage.
<http://leg.mt.gov/bills/mca/20/1/20-1-501.htm>
- State Systematic Improvement Plan (SSIP)
 Under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) the OPI is required to annually report on the progress of the state in improving outcomes for students with disabilities and the overall compliance with the IDEA requirements. As a part of this process, the OPI has developed

a State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) that describes the collaborative efforts of the various OPI divisions to address the identified measurable result for improving student outcomes. In Montana, the goal of the SSIP is to increase the number and percentage of American Indian students with disabilities that complete school.

<http://opi.mt.gov/pdf/SpecED/FY14PerfReport.pdf>

- Montana Higher Education Consortium (HEC)

HEC is a unique community of practice that has brought together general and special education faculty members from all teacher training programs in the State of Montana. The HEC has met twice a year for the past fifteen years to discuss critical issues and share ideas relating to teacher training programs in Montana. The meetings have created a strong partnership and collaboration between faculty members at the teacher training programs. The universities and colleges in Montana benefit from the information they receive from the Montana Office of Public Instruction. The HEC has connected and collaborated with two Office of Special Education Program (OESP) national centers: 1) International Resource Information System (IRIS) Center and 2) Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform (CEEDAR) Center.

<http://www.taese.org/cms/index.php/majorinitiatives/2014-01-14-03-54-22>

<http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/>

<https://ceedar.education.ufl.edu/>

- Montana Teachers Dual Credit Incentive Program

Supported by the Montana University System (MUS), the Montana Dual Credit Incentive Program includes several projects to increase the pool of secondary teachers who are credentialed to deliver college courses in their high schools.

- Board of Regents Temporary Waiver Option

The Montana Board of Regents created a temporary waiver option for concurrent enrollment teachers to address qualification hurdles. This allows a teacher who is seeking to offer general education courses for concurrent enrollment without the required master's degree in the content area or master's degree in education to seek a temporary waiver for meeting that requirement.

- Graduate Course Availability Assessment and Opportunities

The MUS is working with campuses to assess the availability of graduate credits in formats that work for teachers. This included schedules amenable to teachers, online availability, and also assessing the prevalence of courses open to non-degree seeking students, not requiring GRE, or open to student's ala carte enrollment.

<http://mus.edu/DualCredit/Programs.asp>

<http://mus.edu/DualCredit/ProfessionalDevelopment.asp>

Equitable Access

Montana has worked to close the opportunity and achievement gaps in order to ensure educational equity for every student. The Office of Public Instruction is focusing on innovative planning that will address the barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students. Both the agency and schools have an enhanced opportunity to work together and with other state partners to ensure that family income, race/ethnicity, English-language proficiency, and disability status no longer predict a child's educational opportunities and outcomes.

Montana has identified and prioritized the following factors that are essential to address in ensuring equity in education, especially in the lowest performing schools:

- increasing access to rigorous curriculum
- increasing access to effective teachers and leaders
- supporting English learners, students with disabilities, homeless, migrant, and other student subgroups
- addressing students' social-emotional learning needs

The OPI has targeted the priorities above to improve equity in opportunities and outcomes for every child. The intent of the OPI and its stakeholders is to focus efforts on working collaboratively with LEAs, statewide agencies, organizations, and other partners to advance equity by thinking more holistically across titles and provisions to advance a comprehensive strategy.

Transforming student and learning supports is essential in guaranteeing equity of opportunity to student's access and success in a broad, well-rounded education.

Key Activities to Support Equitable Access

- OPI collaboration with LEAs and state leadership partners, including MEA-MFT, School Administrators of Montana (SAM), Montana University System (MUS), Montana School Board Association (MSBA), Montana Small School Alliance (MSSA), and Montana Rural Education Association (MREA)
- Montana College and Career Readiness Standards revision and implementation process
- Equitable access for teachers and school leaders to evidence-based professional learning opportunities that improve instructional strategies and student learning and success
- Integrated multi-tiered system of support framework to promote equitable access for every student to an inclusive, well-rounded education with learning and student supports

Access to Well-rounded Education

The Montana Board of Public Education (BPE) adopts learning standards for key content areas that clearly define grade level expectations that progress toward the competencies students need to succeed in career and college. Pursuant to Article X Sect 1(2) of the Constitution of the state of Montana and statutes §20-1-501 and §20-9-309 2(c) MCA, the implementation of these standards must incorporate the distinct and unique cultural heritage of Montana American Indians.

The Montana Board of Public Education (BPE) has adopted the following content standards:

- Arts, July 2016
- Health Education, July 2016
- Physical Education, July 2016
- Science, Sept 2016
- Mathematics, Nov 2011
- English Language Arts and Literacy, Nov 2011
- Digital Literacy, January 2010
- Social Studies, Oct 2010
- Career and Technical Education, Oct 2010
- World Languages, October 1999

LEA curriculum and instruction as required by Montana (MCA 10.55.603) is aligned to the state academic standards. By aligning to these standards, LEAs safeguard that students have equal access to a challenging, well-rounded instructional and learning experience that ensures all students graduate prepared to succeed in any postsecondary setting and the workforce.

Montana recognizes the need to support LEAs efforts to provide every student a well-rounded academic education that provides other programs and options, including advanced and accelerated learning opportunities, career and technical education programs, health and wellness programs, physical education programs, arts and music programs, and educational technology programs.

With the passage of ESSA, the OPI and LEAs are now able to broaden the definition of a well-rounded education. While strong literacy and math skills are essential for student success, a well-rounded education allows students to develop skills and knowledge in a wide range of subjects and gives the OPI and LEAs the opportunity to get the balance right in places where the focus has become too narrow. Doing so ensures access and equity for all students.

Activities to Support a Well-Rounded Education

Indian Education for All

The Indian Education Division works to provide all educators with the knowledge, skills and resources to implement the Indian Education for All Act (MCA 20-1-501) in a culturally responsive manner. Indian Education for All (IEFA) is an integral component in ongoing efforts to provide all students with a high quality education. IEFA offers students an opportunity to meet rigorous state standards in multiple content areas and grade levels as they learn about the distinct and unique cultures and heritages of American Indians.

<http://opi.mt.gov/Programs/IndianEd/Index.html>

The Montana Digital Academy

In 2009, the Montana Legislature passed a law which created the Montana Digital Academy, a statewide online public K-12 school (MCA 20-7-1201). The purposes of the Montana Digital Academy is to provide Montana students equitable access to distance learning opportunities that emphasize core subject matter, as well as offer dual credit and enrichment courses that are available to all school-age children through public school districts in the state of Montana. ESSA stakeholders recommended expanding offerings for middle school students on the Digital Academy.

<http://montanadigitalacademy.org/>

Teacher Learning Hub

The Montana Teacher Learning Hub is a learning network on the Moodle platform dedicated to providing free, high quality professional learning for all K-12 educators across Montana. Over the past three years, the MEA-MFT, MT Digital Academy, and OPI partnership project team has worked to develop over 160 online modules that focus on instructional strategies and student learning supports. The Hub has over 4,000 registered users. The Hub minimizes the time teachers spend away from their classrooms to attend training, as well as save school districts money by providing evidenced-based professional learning that does not require that teachers travel.

<http://learninghub.mrooms.net/>

Teacher Leadership Academies and Activities to Support All Students

The Office of Public Instruction, Montana University System (MUS), and other statewide partners are

building effective professional learning programs to support teacher leaders across the state. These leaders help guide and support local and regional teachers in developing and deepening a shared understanding of content knowledge and effective instructional strategies that engage and promote student learning and academic success.

Standards Based Teaching Renewing Educators Across Montana (STREAM)

This OPI and MUS partnership project has built a statewide regional professional learning infrastructure of regional K-12 Mathematics Teacher Leaders for the Montana Mathematics standards. This project is currently funded with Math Science Partnership Funds, Title II-B through Sept 2018.

<http://www.streammath.org/>

Montana Partnership with Regions for Excellence in STEM (MPRES)

This OPI and MUS partnership project provides teachers with professional development to assist them in teaching science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. The project has built a statewide professional learning infrastructure of a statewide core group of MPRES Teacher Leaders who provide professional development to other teachers across the state. This project is currently funded with Math Science Partnership Funds, Title II-B through Sept 2018.

<http://www.mtscienceducation.org/>

Mathematics Science Partnership Teacher Leadership Project (MSP-LEAD)

This OPI and MUS partnership project prepares teacher leaders in grades 5-12 to lead improvement in mathematics and science at the local, regional, and state level. Combining training, collaboration, and mentorship, MSP-LEAD applies best practices in professional learning to help teacher leaders share content knowledge and instructional strategies with other teachers in their regions and schools. This project is currently funded with Math Science Partnership Funds, Title II-B through Sept 2018.

<http://opi.mt.gov/Curriculum/MSP/>

Flathead Reservation Algebra Collaborative (FRAcTion)

This OPI and MUS partnership project first targeted the Flathead Indian Reservation schools to address implementing mathematics standards through Mathematical Practices. Working with the STREAM project leadership and the Indian Education Division, FRAcTion has since spread to another reservation and plans to expand to other reservations in the future. This project is currently funded with Math Science Partnership Funds, Title II-B through Sept 2018.

http://opi.mt.gov/Curriculum/MSP/#gpm1_2

Symposium on Montana Mathematics Teaching (SuMMiT)

SuMMiT annually brings together leaders from Montana's universities, tribal colleges, and K-12 education to address issues, collaboratively solve problems in pre-service mathematics education, and align and expand evidenced-based initiatives for mathematics education. This project is currently funded with OPI and Math Science Partnership Funds, Title II-B through Sept 2018.

Mathematics Pathways to Advance Teachers of High School (M-PATH)

This Montana State University project aims to advance a cohort of non-licensed or miss-assigned high school mathematics teachers on a pathway towards endorsement in mathematics with a suite of graduate-level content courses designed specifically for high school mathematics teachers. This project is currently funded with OPI and Math Science Partnership Funds, Title II-B through Sept 2018.

http://opi.mt.gov/Curriculum/MSP/#gpm1_2

MT Math Teachers' Circles

This MUS project goal is to invigorate middle school and high school mathematics teachers through problem solving activities, to facilitate connections among and between local and regional mathematics teachers and mathematicians, and to create an ongoing, supportive, and collaborative community. This project is currently funded with Montana University System Title II-B funds through Sept 2018.

<http://hs.umont.edu/math/mtmathteacherscircle/>

Northwest Earth and Space Sciences Pipeline (NESSP)

The NESSP Project enhances existing earth and space science programs and launches new efforts throughout Washington, Oregon, and Montana with a particular focus on underserved and underrepresented communities. Based at the University of Washington, this project brings together educational institutions, K-12 teachers, and informal education organizations to inspire, teach, and recruit the next generation of students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. This project is currently funded with NASA funding through Dec 2020.

<http://www.washington.edu/news/2016/02/17/nasa-funded-consortium-to-support-science-education-in-washington-oregon-and-montana/>

MT Teacher Leader of the Arts Project

This Office of Public Instruction, Montana Arts Council, and Salish Kootenai College partnership project has built a statewide infrastructure of Montana Teacher Leader of the Arts who provide statewide support to other teachers in integrating the arts into their classroom instruction. The teacher leaders attend a summer institute at the Salish Kootenai College and continue as a professional learning community that has ongoing blended professional learning throughout the school year. This project is supported by Montana Arts Council, OPI, and NEA funding.

<http://mtmusiced.com/montana-teacher-leaders-in-the-arts-2016-2017-applications-now-available/>

Montana Writing Projects

The Montana Writing Project, the Yellowstone Writing Project, and the Elk River Writing Project provide professional learning for teachers in order to improve writing and learning for all students. These three OPI and MUS partnership projects support teacher leadership in regions across the state. The Elk River Project specifically provides support to high-need LEAs with teacher workshops that integrate evidence-based literacy practices, Indian Education for All, and strategies to improve academic achievement for American Indians. These projects are supported by OPI, MUS, and the National Writing Project.

<https://www.facebook.com/The-Montana-Writing-Project-MWP-139508476069438/about/>

<http://www.montana.edu/english/ywp.html>

<http://elkriverwritingproject.weebly.com/>

School Conditions

Montana recognizes that safe and supportive school environments matter because they nurture and facilitate strong collaborative learning communities that support the whole child, the whole school as well as the whole community. Positive school conditions are essential for promoting student learning, academic achievement, school success, and healthy development. Positive school conditions are key to promoting effective risk prevention, positive youth development, and positive social relationships that support, respect, engage, and value every child.

The Office of Public Instruction has an essential role in providing assistance to LEAs in prioritizing their safe and healthy student activities to support positive school environments, which may include bullying,

violence and suicide prevention; health enhancement; substance use; mental health; and natural, technology and man-made disasters preparation and response plans.

Key Initiatives to Support School Conditions

- Montana Behavior Initiative
The Montana Behavioral Initiative (MBI), implemented over 25 years ago in Montana, is a proactive approach in creating behavioral supports and a social culture that establishes social, emotional, and academic success for all students. MBI uses a positive response to intervention framework which provides a three-tiered continuum of support and a problem solving process to assist schools in meeting the needs of and effectively educating all students.
<http://www.opi.mt.gov/Programs/SchoolPrograms/MBI/>
- My Voice Student Survey
The MBI and the OPI have been promoting and supporting the My Voice Survey as an evidence-based tool for LEAs to measure school climate. This student survey provides insight on student perceptions of their school experience. The survey is completed on-line and results are provided to a school based on eight conditions that affect student aspirations.
http://www.opi.mt.gov/Programs/SchoolPrograms/MBI/#p7GPc1_8
- Bully-Free Montana Tool Kit
In 2015, the Montana legislature passed an unfunded anti-bullying law that simply reads, “Bullying of a student enrolled in a public K-12 school by another student or an employee is prohibited” (MCA 20-5-209). Prior to that new law, the OPI created a Bully-Free Toolkit which is a portfolio of templates on model policies, reporting structures, tools for parents, and other resources that districts may implement. The ESSA stakeholders have recommended that the Montana Office of Public Instruction expand the resources available to schools to support them in bully prevention efforts as funding allows.
<http://opi.mt.gov/Programs/TitlePrgms/SafeSchools/bully.html>
- Violence and Suicide Prevention
In 2015, the Montana legislature passed the *Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training Act* that charged the OPI to provide guidance and technical assistance to Montana schools (MCA 20-7-1310). Working with other state agencies and organizations, the OPI is in the process of identifying, guiding, and providing technical assistance to Montana schools.
<http://www.sprc.org/news/montana-school-policy-and-training-legislation>
- School Safety and Emergency Operations Planning
Montana law requires LEAs to adopt a school safety or emergency operations plan that addresses issues of school safety (MCA 20-1-401). The OPI has developed guidelines to support schools in assessing school conditions. This process helps LEAs to develop a safety structure that addresses physical, cultural, climate, psychological and emotional health for prevention and response to an emergency or incident. The OPI anticipates supporting schools in their planning and implementation process based on the outcomes of this self-assessment.
http://opi.mt.gov/Programs/HealthTopics/index.html?gpm=1_7#gpm1_6
- Mental Health Programs

The OPI has addressed school-based mental health through a variety of grants and funding sources across divisions. The OPI has several successful pilot projects, including wrap around services, suicide prevention protocols, interconnected system's framework, and trauma-informed education. The agency also currently assists LEAs in setting up tiered mental health services. The OPI recognizes that the lessons learned have not been shared with all LEAs and the pilot projects have not been implemented to scale statewide due to limited resources. Our ESSA stakeholders have recommended that the OPI and other mental health partners support the scaling up of the above mentioned projects so that more LEAs have access to evidence-based strategies for addressing mental health needs in their schools and communities.

<http://opi.mt.gov/programs/healthTopics/suicideaware.html>

<http://www.pbis.org/school/school-mental-health/interconnected-systems>

- **School-based Child Nutrition Programs**

The Montana Office of Public Instruction Health Enhancement Division is dedicated to promoting nutritional wellbeing as part of a comprehensive learning environment focused on reducing disparity in student populations by encouraging participation in various school nutrition programs and through nutrition education in curriculum to promote healthy choices.

http://opi.mt.gov/Programs/SchoolPrograms/School_Nutrition/index.html

Use of Technology

Montana recognizes the need for all students to have access to robust technology and skill development to enhance their digital literacy across the various technologies. Basic technology operation skills provide the foundation upon which student capabilities and conceptual understanding are built to prepare students for their future work and careers. The Office of Public Instruction is working 1) to expand student learning opportunities with technology opportunities for all students, 2) to afford equitable access to historically disadvantaged students to evidence-based learning materials and supports, and 3) to increase Montana educators' capacity for using blended learning opportunities for students to support personalized-learning and supports.

In order to support students' access to technology and instructional opportunities and to empower teachers who continually innovate with technology, the Office of Public Instruction recognizes that partnerships must be enhanced or formed both within the state agency and with stakeholders including other agencies, organizations, higher education, and business and industry. The intent of these partnerships is two-fold: 1) to provide students with unique opportunities to experience technology applications and innovations in business and industry and 2) to find additional funding for evidence-based, innovative digital learning projects.

Key Initiatives and Activities to Support Technology

- **Digital Academy**

In 2009, the Montana Legislature passed a law which created the Montana Digital Academy, a statewide online public K-12 school (MCA 20-7-1201). The purposes of the Montana Digital Academy is to provide Montana students equitable access to distance learning opportunities that emphasize core subject matter, as well as offer dual credit and enrichment courses that are available to all school-age children through public school districts in the state of Montana. ESSA stakeholders recommended expanding offerings for middle school students on the Digital Academy.

<http://montanadigitalacademy.org/>

- Teacher Learning Hub

The Montana Teacher Learning Hub is a learning network on the Moodle platform dedicated to providing free, high quality professional learning for all K-12 educators across Montana. Over the past three years, the MEA-MFT, MT Digital Academy, and OPI partnership project team has worked to develop over 160 online modules that focus on instructional strategies and student learning supports. The Hub has over 4000 registered users who minimize the time they spend away from their classrooms to attend training, as well as save school districts money by providing free evidenced-based professional learning that does not require that teachers travel. <http://learninghub.mrooms.net/>

- EdReady Montana

EdReady is a personalized-learning mathematics readiness tool available at no cost to Montana schools from middle school to high school to college and adult basic education. This interactive online program provides a variety of student learning and support options:

- prepare for upcoming local math classes or curriculum
- supplement their skills while taking a math class
- revisit possible gaps in general math skills
- become better prepared for college math
- practice math skills needed for a desired career path
- study and review math concepts for a standardized exam

<http://edreadymontana.org/>

- Montana ACT Prep

With the OPI and the Montana Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) partnership that includes funding from Montana GEAR UP, Montana offers free on-line ACT prep for all 10,700 students in 11th grade. Students have access to practice tests and essays with complete scoring, content reviews, and diagnostic tests via the internet. Site licenses provide tools for educators to analyze data in order to impact and individualize instruction.

<http://mus.edu/gearup/>

Parent and Family Engagement

As a large and sparsely populated rural state, Montana has historically been dependent on parent, family, and community engagement as a cornerstone of a child's public education. With ESSA's focus on enhancing family and community engagement to help support every child's success, the Office of Public Instruction and its stakeholders have identified what is working and which innovative activities need to be expanded and enhanced to assist more school communities. The OPI has identified a collaborative agency team, working across divisions, who will work to expand an array of effective initiatives and activities that will be promoted and shared across divisions, programs, and statewide partnership projects.

The OPI plans to create a unified agency vision and mission to assist all LEAs in engaging families and communities in a consistent manner across programs funded within the LEA. The OPI anticipates building a portfolio of measurable models and programs that align and coordinate across divisions, programs, and statewide partners. The OPI will work to support LEAs in increasing the effectiveness of implementation of family engagement that is aligned across the district including adult education and family literacy (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act). As resources allow, the OPI will partner

with Education Northwest in order to assess current programs, develop a unified vision and process of implementation to address the unique needs of each community whose needs may include high poverty, American Indian families and communities, military families, families of English learners, and rural and isolated communities.

In order to accomplish this mission to strengthen parent and family engagement in Montana schools, the OPI will collaborate with other state agencies, including the Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Corrections, Department of Justice, and Office of The Commissioner of Higher Education. Other partnerships and supports include statewide and local non-profits and foundations that support and engage children and families.

Key Initiatives to Parent and Family Engagement

- Montana Behavior Initiative (MBI)
<http://www.opi.mt.gov/Programs/SchoolPrograms/MBI/>
- Parent Teacher Home Visit Project <http://www.pthvp.org>
- Academic Parent Teacher Teams (APTT) <https://www.wested.org/service/academic-parent-teacher-teams-aptt-family-engagement-in-education/>
- LEA Family/Home Coordinators
- LEA Head Start housed within the K-12 system

Identification of English Learners

Montana has created standardized statewide entrance procedures for the accurate and timely identification of English learners (ELs).

- Home Language Survey
The process begins with every enrolling student's parent or guardian filling out a home language survey in order to gather data on languages spoken in the home or in the student's life. The home language survey establishes eligibility for the student to be screened on the WIDA W-APT Language screener.
- W-APT Language Screener
This screener assesses students in all four domains of language (speaking, listening, reading and writing). If a student's scores fall below the English language proficiency criteria, it is determined that they are an English learner and qualify for EL services. This process will take place and an EL identification status will be completed by an LEA within 30 days of enrollment. To ensure this occurs, there will be an assurance in the E-grant application for ESEA funds.
- Teacher Observation Checklist
Based on experience, Montana has created a second entry point for eligibility of ELs by through a Teacher Observation Checklist. This checklist allows classroom teachers the opportunity to observe students language and determine if that student should be screened on the language screener based on a language other than English impacting a student's ability to meet the same challenging state standards that all children are expected to meet. Once it is established that a language other than English may be impacting the student, they are given the WIDA W-APT screener to determine EL status.
- Exit Criteria

Montana has developed English language proficiency criteria for ALL ELs to determine when an EL no longer requires EL services. An EL must obtain a 5.0 or better score on the overall composite score on the WIDA ACCESS 2.0 or WIDA ACCESS Kindergarten assessment. The student must also obtain a 4.0 or better score on both the reading and writing subtests in order to be considered eligible for exiting EL status. Once a student has obtained these scores, schools will develop a plan to review the EL data and make a determination if they are performing at grade level expectations in English and are able to fully participate in society. If these criteria are met, then the student is eligible to exit EL status.

- **Outreach and Technical Assistance**

In order for The OPI to communicate the new standardized procedures, the OPI will provide guidance on the OPI website, face-to-face trainings, Teacher Hub Online Classes, technical assistance, regional trainings and connections with Title I conferences and training. Throughout the outreach process, The OPI will collaborate with the Title I Group of Practitioners regarding the implementation of the new procedures and continually develop appropriate and meaningful outreach.

Identification of Students with Disabilities

Under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) the Office of Public Instruction is responsible for providing guidance and support to every LEA in implementing the Child Find requirements. In order to ensure timely and accurate identification of students with disabilities, the OPI conducts on-site compliance monitoring to ensure the implementation of strong child find activities and to provide data used in determining the appropriate supports for each LEA. The OPI monitors district performance and uses the data available to target the professional development and technical assistance activities funded by the IDEA.

The OPI anticipates the professional development monies available through the various title programs will be used to provide training that supplements existing programs with a particular focus on high ability/high potential and English learners that are also students with disabilities.

Key Initiatives and Activities to Support Identification of Students with Disabilities

- **Montana Behavioral Initiative (MBI)**

MBI provides training and technical assistance to LEAs in implementing a system of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to improve school climate and parent and family involvement; and, to reduce disciplinary removals of students.

<http://www.opi.mt.gov/Programs/SchoolPrograms/MBI/>

- **Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD)**

CSPD is a statewide system that supports regional councils to develop ongoing professional development based on the needs of the LEAs in Montana's five educational service regions. In addition to conducting a needs survey, each region examines data regarding student performance and outcomes to more effectively target the professional development offered to support instructional strategies to support student learning and success.

<http://www.opi.mt.gov/Programs/CSPD/>

- **Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)**

This Montana MTSS project provides training and ongoing support to LEAs in developing and implementing an integrated multi-tiered framework at the building level. LEAs create an infrastructure for the promoting the delivery of high-quality instruction for all students and, when needed, providing additional student supports and interventions varying in intensity. <http://opi.mt.gov/Programs/SchoolPrograms/MTSS.html>

Other State Strategies

Homeless Students - Title IX, Part A of ESSA

The OPI views the Homeless Education Program as a framework for supporting homeless students across the state. Due to the rural and frontier nature of many LEAs, it can be a daunting challenge to provide the necessary resources to poor communities to create and support a robust program to support homeless students. The OPI encourages all communities to view Homeless Education through the lens of an integrated multi-tiered system of support framework. By using a systematic and systemic approach to meeting the needs of all students, homeless students will be able to access interventions designed to increase their academic success and positively impact their social and emotional well-being.

As resources allow, the OPI will target LEAs for intensive technical assistance and professional development to increase the identification of homeless children and youths in rural communities through the use of state and local data on child poverty, school based nutrition programs, and the location of homeless shelters and other services. The OPI will promote and expand the collaborative efforts with the Montana Continuum of Care, and with local agencies and non-profits providing housing and other supports to homeless children and youths.

- American Indian Achievement: Based on experience, the OPI will expand and enhance culturally responsive student supports to schools serving high populations of American Indian students to increase identification of and services to homeless students. In order to accomplish this goal, the OPI will develop training materials to meet the unique needs of schools in American Indian communities, in both urban and rural settings. The OPI will partner with agencies and non-profits providing housing and services to homeless families, children and youths to increase collaboration between LEAs and local service providers. The OPI also will partner with the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, Montana School Counseling Association, and other federally funded higher education programs (Upward Bound, Talent Search, and Student Support Services) to provide supports to homeless and former foster youth at all Montana public and tribal colleges to increase college enrollment, attendance, and success for at-risk youth.

Title I D, Subpart 1

The Title I, Part D, Subpart 1 Program will continue to support the educational programming provided to children and youths in the custody of the Montana Department of Corrections (DOC). Programs for juveniles will continue to emphasize academic enrichment through the provision of high quality career and technical education programs. Programs for youths up to age 21 will focus on completion of alternative diploma programs and other adult education programs.

The OPI Neglected and Delinquent Coordinator will increase collaborative efforts with the Career and Technical Education Division to provide professional development and technical assistance to the DOC's juvenile correctional facilities. The Coordinator will also partner with the Special Education Division to support the work of the High Tier Community of Practice to pilot a program focused on successfully

transitioning students between DOC facilities, therapeutic facilities, group homes, and LEAs providing education, support, and housing to juvenile justice, foster care, and other at-risk children and youths.

As resources allow, the Coordinator will work with the Department of Corrections, other facilities and agencies, and local LEAs with high populations of system involved children and youths to develop a portfolio of targeted supports and interventions aimed at increasing the graduation rates of these students and their successful transition to college or careers.

Title I D, Subpart 2

The Title I, Part D, Subpart 2 Program will continue to provide assistance to LEAs with high numbers of students who are at-risk due to their contact with the juvenile justice system. LEAs that currently receive the sub-grant are required to coordinate with local programs funded under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

LEAs will be asked to align their transition programs with the work of the High Tier Community of Practice to increase student success as they transition between DOC facilities, therapeutic facilities, group homes, and LEAs providing education, support, and housing to juvenile justice, foster care, and other at-risk children and youths.

As resources allow, the Coordinator will also focus on increasing services to children and youths transitioning between tribal juvenile detention facilities and LEAs, with a focus on collaborating with tribal councils and elders to create culturally appropriate intervention programs.

21st Century Community Learning Centers

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) will continue to support the creation of community learning centers that provide academic enrichment and parental engagement opportunities during non-school hours for children, particularly for students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools. These centers help students meet state and local standards in core academic subject areas, such as reading and math, and also offer a broad array of enrichment activities that support socio-emotional learning, technology, recreation, cultural, health and educational services to families of participating children. The programs are designed to be a local collaborative effort where schools, community-based organizations, towns, counties, and business partners come together to provide academic support, enrichment, and a safe, healthy environment during non-school hours for children at the elementary, middle and high school level.

The Montana 21st CCLC program will continue to collaborate with the Montana University system, local and national businesses in providing elementary, middle, and high schools students with STEM opportunities that afford our students with opportunities to compete at the state, national, and world level. Our Native American students were the first Native students to Attend Nationals and Worlds in the world's largest STEM based program, (F1 in schools.) Through these opportunities are students have gain math, science, language arts and career readiness skills. The educators have received professional development in the STEM fields and the opportunity to learn about career development through the Career Development Facilitator Training (CDF). Our educators were the first in the state to receive this nationally recognized certification.

Grantees will continue to collaborate with all title programs and school day staff in aligning their programs with the school day. Through the process of aligning with the school day the programs will

offer a broad array of high-quality activities including youth development, drug and violence prevention, career development, art and music, along with the academic support in the core disciplines. The Montana 21st CCLC program coordinator collaborates with other OPI and state departments in providing academic, enrichment and parental engagement opportunities for the students and families. Currently the 21st CCLC program coordinator is working with Indian Education and the Homeless programs in combining resources to better serve Montana schools, communities, and families.

Title V B, Subpart 2

The Office of Public Instruction will approve and monitor the Rural and Low-Income School grants to ensure that 100% of the grants implement activities allowed under the applicable title program regulations by spring 2018.

DRAFT